



CONNECTING HAMPTON'S NEIGHBORHOODS

AUGUST
2002

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Neighborhood Link

PUBLISHED BY:

THE HAMPTON NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

Aberdeen Gardens:

To read more about Aberdeen go to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources site at <http://state.vipnet.org/dhr/home.htm>

Good to Know:

For tips on how to be a good neighbor to a new neighbor visit our website at hampton.gov/neighborhoods.

Neighborhood College:

The Neighborhood Office is offering neighborhood organizations the opportunity to sponsor Neighborhood College sessions in your neighborhood. For more info call Sheila Williams @ 727-6460.

Neighborhood Leaders... Mark Your Calendars!

Virginia Statewide Neighborhood Conference
September 27-28, 2002
Charlottesville, VA
For more information call 727-6460

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2002's NUSA "Neighborhood of the Year": Hampton, VA

Aberdeen Gardens Historic & Civic Association

By Kaye Risser-Williamson

[EDITOR'S NOTE: the following article was originally published in the Neighborhoods USA national newsletter]

The Westin Galleria conference hall was abuzz with excitement as over 1600 NUSA conference attendees awaited the announcement of 2002's "Neighborhood of the Year" (NOTY) Award Winners on May 25 in Houston TX. Awarding of these prestigious honors is the highlight of the four-day NUSA Conference, with winners announced each year at the Saturday closing luncheon.

Applications from neighborhood associations across the nation had been pared down to 12 finalists competing in three categories for 1st and 2nd place, honorable mention, and the Grand Prize Winner as overall Neighborhood of the Year. In-person presentations were made at the conference to finalize the winners. The Grand Prize Winner as well as the First Place Winner in the Multi-Neighborhood Project Partnerships category was Aberdeen Gardens Historic & Civic Association (AGHCA) of

Hampton, Virginia. AGCHA's submitted project was the Aberdeen Gardens Museum, a family house, chicken coop and garden area restored to preserve the history of a New Deal resettlement community, originally a slave plantation, which was designed and built by African-Americans during 1933-38. Cash awards from NUSA totaling \$2000 will go toward helping to furnish the museum for its grand opening in September.

The project involved a collaboration between Aberdeen Gardens, its adjacent neighborhoods, the City of Hampton Neighborhood Office and

ten other partners. Organized in 1993 to "establish, promote and maintain a museum and to educate the public about the rich history that the museum represents," the AGHCA acquired a 50-year-old dilapidated and condemned house with the help of the Hampton Neighborhood Office. AGHCA volunteers made repairs to make the house and property safer. The City of Hampton and the Peninsula Housing & Builders Association then worked together to accomplish more substantial (roofing and structural) repairs. In-kind donations were made by an architectural firm,



BEFORE



AFTER

contract specialist and licensed contractor. AGCHA applied for and received a \$100,000 matching grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia to complete the project and through many hours of volunteer time by AGHCA and its partners, the restoration of the museum house was completed in June 2001. AGHCA then proceeded to purchase the adjoining house and property to be a part of the museum complex. The matching share requirement of the grant was completely met. Aside from

(continues on page 2)

Director's Note

Welcome to the first edition of Neighborhood Link – a newsletter for neighborhoods, and about neighborhoods. This newsletter is a long overdue resource for all of you who work to make Hampton neighborhoods places we proudly call home.

The Neighborhood Initiative will produce and distribute this newsletter six times a year. Each issue will feature a different district of the city and "theme" related to neighborhood work. With each issue you will be introduced to the many people, ideas, programs and resources that make neighborhood work possible. We hope that sharing these assets will help neighborhoods to connect with each other and the rest of the community.

obtaining the grant, organizers said, the main obstacle was getting the adjacent neighborhoods to join in the project. This was accomplished by making everyone involved feel that "a piece of the project" belonged to them. In the end, everyone joined together and worked under the theme: "In Unity There is Strength, and with Commitment and Work, We Can Achieve."

AGHCA President Roosevelt Wilson says, "We emphasized that the history of historic Aberdeen – built by blacks, for blacks – embodied the spirit that belongs to all of us, to our neighborhood and to the nation. That spirit permeated across neighborhood lines and throughout neighborhoods in Hampton. It is alive and its Aberdeen Gardens' gift to the future. We make the spirit live because it is within us." Shellae Blackwell, Senior Facilitator of the Neighborhood Office in Hampton says,

As is the case with everything "neighborhood" that we do, this publication will need to be a partnership to be successful. So we need your ideas and contributions. Tell us what you want to learn more about. Submit the successes and challenges that you want to share with other neighborhoods in Hampton.

And when you finish reading this copy of the newsletter, please pass it on to someone else or leave it where someone who could use it might find it.

Again, welcome and thank you for your support of Hampton neighborhoods!

[Signature]
Jean Kennedy
Director

"Neighborhood of the Year"

(continued from page 1)

"The Aberdeen project epitomizes a true partnership where neighborhoods, non-profits, the government and residents came together to work together to help achieve the dream."

Another dream came true for AGHCA conference attendees when they returned home from the NUSA conference. Keeping in mind that the AGHCA mission statement is to "enhance the quality of life for all citizens in Historic Aberdeen Gardens and adjacent neighborhoods, with an emphasis on heritage, to become the most livable community in the United States," NOTY winners were delighted to learn that Hampton, VA had just been named as one of the top ten All-America Cities by the National Civic League. For more information about the Aberdeen project, contact Shellae Blackwell at sblackwell@hampton.gov.

With boundaries stretching from Mercury Boulevard to the North, Interstate 664 to the South, Interstate 64 to the East, and Newport News to the West, District 10 is home to the Crystal Lake Condominium Association, Powhatan Park Neighborhood Watch, Briarwood Association and Aberdeen Gardens Historic & Civic Association.

In spite of being one of the older areas of Hampton, District 10 has been growing steadily for years maintaining modest housing with little vacancy. Many attribute this area's staying power to the efforts of the strong civic associations there. This has been evidenced most recently when Aberdeen Gardens Historic and Civic Association was named "Neighborhood of the Year" (see cover story). Aberdeen's contributions in the recognition of Hampton are invaluable, as it takes great neighborhoods to make great cities.

DISTRICT ASSETS:

- Nationally recognized historic landmarks such as the Aberdeen Gardens area as it was the first settlement built by African-Americans for African-Americans through President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" program in 1938.
- A variety of child care providers, Health Care for the Homeless, Saint Tammany Lodge, and Hampton Fraternal Order of Police.
- Numerous development programs for youth including athletics, parks and

- All of these assets and the dedicated come together to make District 10 a shining example for people to follow nationwide, and they have the award to prove it. This was perhaps stated best by Roosevelt Wilson, President of Aberdeen Gardens Historic and Civic Association who said, "In unity there is strength. It's all about coming together, working together, and achieving."

CHALLENGES:

- Effective structure for information flow
- Newmarket Creek flooding impact on homeowners
- Future of Mercury Mall Plaza
- Aging population
- SOL scores in elementary schools
- Additional supermarkets

INSIDE District 10

REGISTERED NEIGHBORHOODS:

- Pohatian Park
- Neighborhood Watch
- Aberdeen Gardens
- Power Plant
- New housing construction in Copeland Industrial Park
- River Vista and Grist Mill.
- Future community center
- Lindsay Middle School
- Copeland Industrial Park

NEIGHBORHOOD FUNDING:

- [Since 1995] Neighborhood Matching Grants \$29,956
- Neighborhood Month Grants \$113,262

COMMISSIONER: Joseph P. Holland

TERM: 7/1/00 – 6/30/04

ADDRESS: 1035 Randall Court • Hampton, VA 23666

PHONE: 757-826-1281 • E-MAIL: hollandjp@erols.com

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT: Aberdeen Gardens Historic & Civic Association
Aberdeen Gardens Museum Restoration • Retired Armed Forces Club
Bethel High School Booster Club • American Legion

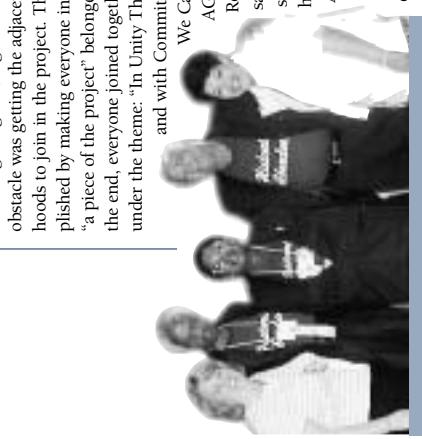
PROFESSION: Retired, Federal Auditor
GOAL AS COMMISSIONER: "I have lived in the Aberdeen area for some 36 years and wanted to get involved in order to give something back to my city and my community."

FACILITATOR: Shellae Blackwell

Senior Facilitator: District 9 & 10
Neighborhood Office • 757-6460 • sblackwell@hampton.gov



Come enjoy free family movies on the waterfront at Buckroe Park. Entertainment begins at 7 p.m. Movies start at sunset.
For more information, call 311 or 757-831 from cell phones.



Could your neighborhood be the 2003 "Neighborhood of the Year"? If your neighborhood has implemented an innovative community project and you would like to nominate it for the NOTY award, you may find registration information at <http://nus.org> or call 757-6460.



LEADERSHIP CORNER: Roving Leaders in the Community

By Graham Curran

His January and the president of a prestigious business franchise takes his team on a retreat to a ski resort. The company had a prosperous year so all 25 members of this particular branch, from the senior VPs to the mail clerk, are invited to celebrate the past year's work and to focus them on the upcoming year. The group hits the slopes and a few meander to a snow hill that overlooks a thinly frozen lake. Without warning the snow shifts and four people slide into the freezing water.

So what did the President and the senior staff do? They did nothing. However within moments members of the group stepped up. A secretary who was a fairly accomplished skier told the group she would go find help and skied off. A recently hired manager began looking for things to use as flotation devices to buy the victims some time.

He then began rounding up dry clothes for them to use once they were pulled from the lake. The group agreed that the thin ice would not support a rescue. The mail clerk, who had been a lifeguard, volunteered to pull the people from the water as he could get to them while spending the least amount of time in the icy water.

The quick thinking of these unlikely leaders saved the lives of these people, but the only reason they were unlikely is because they lacked positional titles. What they did have were the skills found in "Roving Leaders"- or people who step up and use their special talents when the situation calls for it.

"It is difficult for a hierarchy to allow subordinates to break custom and be leaders," says leadership scholar Max Depree. "No one person of leadership when the situation suits them."

CONTACT US:

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Hampton, VA 23669

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Fax: 757-727-6074

Web: hampton.gov/neighbrhoods

Email: nlm@hampton.gov

WANTED: Day of Caring Volunteers

September 11, 2002 ■ 727-6325
For "Mobile" Community Clean-up
in Hampton



is the expert at everything. In special situations, the hierarchical leader is obliged to identify the roving leader, then to support and follow him or her, and also to exhibit the grace that allows the roving leader to lead."

The point of this illustration, adapted from a similar account by Max Depree, is not to advocate the removal of hierarchies in organizations, but to show that in critical times it may not be practical to go through the chain of command.

The leadership found in communities is made up almost entirely of these reluctant leaders. These are people who see a need in the world around them and know that they have something to offer. Likewise they understand the need to step back when someone is more experienced in dealing with the task at hand.

These leaders are people like our nurses who volunteer to check on elderly in the community, the handyman who helps his neighbors put locks on their doors, the old teacher who tutors neighborhood kids to give them a better chance in life. Though they lack title and power, these are the roving leaders in the community that help raise each other to a better standard of living.

For many, this kind of leadership is not unknown. The lesson, is to take the time to understand this every day occurrence and enable our roving leaders to step forward. This means officials must possess self-discipline at levels low and high, in communities and cities, to recognize these vital people and to have the grace to step back and let them assume the reins of leadership when the situation suits them.

HAMPTON YARD OF THE MONTH WINNERS!!

Helene Letzeller ■ 141 E. Virginia Avenue
Keith & Rita Barker ■ 448 Stockton Street
Williams & Delores Lowe ■ 1 Crew House Rising
Anyone can nominate a yard by calling the Clean City Commission at 727-6394 or by going to

Hampton is the first city in Virginia to build a centralized customer call center for citizens. Customer advocates answer questions about city services and take requests for service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. (list dia 3-1 (or 727-6331.)

NEIGHBORHOODS ON THE MOVE, Hampton's Registered Neighborhoods

By Sydney Mason



Meet Powhatan Park

Over the years, Powhatan Park Neighborhood Watch Block Captains distribute the newsletter. This newsletter is unique because it not only is a vital communication tool, but it is a true grassroots effort to get the community involved in the safety of the neighborhood and sustain those efforts over time. When asked what makes a successful Neighborhood Watch program, Levon Croswell, President of the Briar-Queen Recreation Association replied, "It's a combination of things. It takes people who are familiar with the neighborhood and its people. It also takes a concerted effort to communicate with neighbors and police about what is going on in the neighborhood."

The Briar-Queen Pool is an integral part of the Powhatan Park neighborhood. It is the meeting place for the annual "National Night Out" celebrating Neighborhood Watch. They also have a "Kids Day" in June, July and August at the pool where everyone swims for free. Most recently, they became a Registered Neighborhood Organization through Hampton's Neighborhood Commission. Registration signifies that Powhatan Park subscribes to the principles of the Hampton Neighborhood Initiative. They will also receive a benefits package.

As they look to the future, Powhatan Park plans to investigate the use of security cameras, involve youth in leadership roles in the organization, and work with the Clean City Commission to clean land for future playground and recreation areas.

**For more information
on how to register
your neighborhood
call 727-6460.**



Their Neighborhood Watch Newsletter is published bi-monthly and circulated to all households within their boundaries. Wal-Mart #1361 located on Cunningham Drive sponsors their newsletter by providing printing services. Instead of using the postal system, their

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 2002

CITIZENS ACADEMIES

(Now taking FALL registrations.

Classes begin in September.)

Citizen Codes Academy • 727-8310

Hampton Neighborhood College • 727-6460

Citizens Police Academy • 727-6638

BI-MONTHLY

1st & 3rd Wednesdays

August 7 & 21

Hampton School Board, 7:30 p.m.

Jones Magnet Middle School,

1819 Nickerson Blvd

Carolyn Bowers, 896-8107

2nd & 4th Wednesdays

August 14 & 21

Hampton City Council, 7:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 22 Lincoln St., 8th floor

727-6315

WEEKLY

Tuesdays

Wythe Empowering Minds, 5-6 p.m.

Kenneth Wallace Neighborhood Resource Ctr.

Shawn O'Keefe, 838-2330

AUGUST 6

National Night Out

Contact your Neighborhood Watch Coordinator or call 727-6574

Greater Wythe Area Planning Team

Kenneth Wallace Neighborhood Resource Center, 7-9 p.m., 727-6460

AUGUST 10

Crime Prevention Seminar, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Kenneth Wallace Neighborhood Resource Ctr. 727-6640

AUGUST 12

Planning Commission

Council Chambers, 22 Lincoln St., 8th floor

3 p.m., 727-6140

Neighborhood Commission Meeting,

Kenneth Wallace Neighborhood Resource Ctr.

6-8 p.m., 727-6460

Pine Cone Harbor Condo Association

Clubhouse, 6:30 p.m.

207 Dockside Dr.

Jackie Holman, 722-9994

AUGUST 13

Olde Hampton Community Association

Olde Hampton Community Center, 7 p.m.

Sadie Brown, 722-2447

Buckroe Civic Association

Buckroe Fire Station, 7:30 p.m.

Jennifer Wright, 727-6460

Easthampton Neighborhood Association

Easthampton United Methodist Church, 7 p.m.

Ray Waldon, 722-8756

AUGUST 15

Sussex at Hampton

3829 Roadsview Ave, 6:30 p.m.

Becky Harris, 726-2185

AUGUST 17

Olde Wythe Neighborhood Redesign "Plan Alternatives" Community Meeting

Armstrong Elementary School, 7-9 p.m.

AUGUST 20

Pasture Point Neighborhood Association

Council Chambers, 22 Lincoln St., 8th floor;

7 p.m., 727-6460

AUGUST 26

Farmington Civic Association

Northampton Community Center, 7:30 p.m.

Jack Edwards, 826-4764

AUGUST 27

Wythe Coalition

Kenneth Wallace Neighborhood Resource Ctr.

8-9 p.m., 727-6460

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead



NEXT ISSUE:

Look for our next issue (Sept./Oct.) which will feature the All-America City Award. For more info about Hampton's prestigious award visit www.nci.org



Hampton Neighborhood Initiative

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